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22 September 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Briefing of Senator Stuart Symington on Soviet ICBM  
Program

TIME : 10 - 11 a. m., 18 September 1959

PLACE : Senator Symington's office

PRESENT: Senator Symington  
Dr. Scoville  
Mr. Stoertz

Senator Symington opened by asking to be brought up to date, and by reading a brief statement he had prepared for release to the effect that the US had neither a present nor a prospective capability to accomplish a feat comparable to that of Lunik II. He amplified by referring to the much greater propulsion available to the Russians, and said he had criticized Dr. York for downgrading the military implications of the Lunik.

We described the recent firing program (using a T. S. chart prepared in OSI) for both ICBMs and space vehicles, emphasizing their close relationship and the increase we had made in estimated ICBM payload weight based on that relationship. We covered other

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ICBM characteristics, the two "long" shots (which the Senator had been told about in somewhat garbled form), and our present thinking about IOC date. We indicated a divergence of views in the intelligence community on the probable date.

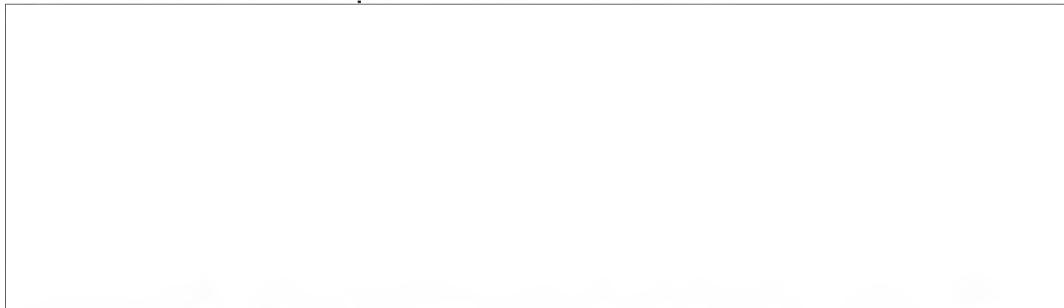
On questioning by Senator Symington, we gave a general measure of possible Soviet future production and operational capabilities with ICBMs, using Hyland Panel conclusions without attribution, but said we were re-examining this problem on the basis of Soviet requirements and intentions. Asked when we expected this to be complete, we replied later this year.

Twice during the meeting Senator Symington raised the matter of Vice President Nixon's statement about three Soviet failures just prior to the successful launching of Lunik II. He said at first that he was concerned about remarks that tended to deprecate Soviet capabilities, and gave us to understand that he wanted to make some further statement about this for the record. We told him of Khrushchev's comment to the Foreign Relations Committee about technical difficulties which required the substitution of a new rocket. [redacted]

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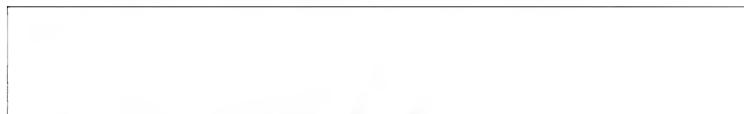


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He left open the question of what he himself might do by way of a public statement.

Throughout our conversation, Senator Symington was receptive and friendly to us and to the Agency. At least one of his comments, however, left the impression that he is still smarting from his exchanges with the DCI relating to his letter to the President of a year ago.

As we were about to leave, the Senator remarked to the effect that neither he nor Senator Russell had been brought up to date on the Soviet ICBM program recently, and requested that we inform him (by visit or phone depending on security considerations) of any additional firings. We said we would, but we require instructions as to how this request can most appropriately be met.



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Herbert Scoville, Jr.



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Howard Stoertz, Jr.

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CIA-DEPT  
100-230024

MEMORANDUM FOR: *The Director*

*See your information*

*22 Sept.*  
(DATE)

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